

April 26, 1999

Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, Maryland 20852

7577 '99 MAY 10 P2:40

Re: Docket No. 98N-1038,
Irradiation in the Production, Processing, and Handling of Food

To whom it may concern:

As a parent I support the recommendation by the Center for Science in the Public Interest regarding labeling of irradiated foods:

"any foods, or any foods containing ingredients that have been treated by irradiation, should be labeled as such with a written statement on the principal display panel indicating such treatment. The statement should be easy to read and placed in close proximity to the name of the food and accompanied by the international symbol. If the food is unpackaged, this information would be clearly displayed on a poster in plain view and adjacent to where the product is displayed for sale."

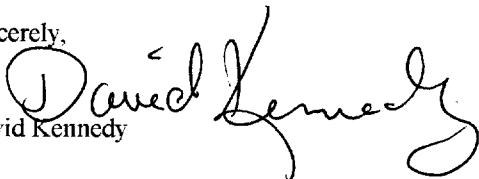
Labeling in the past has been required by the FDA to be truthful and not misleading. "Pasteurization" would be a misleading term to apply to irradiated food because pasteurization involves rapid heating and cooling, something very different than radiation. Grade school children are taught about pasteurization and will quickly be confused into thinking their fruit was cooked. I believe miseducating the public should always be avoided by agencies trusted to protect and inform the public. Please retain the terms "treated with radiation" or "treated by irradiation." Although it is possible that there will be some inappropriate anxiety when irradiated foods are initially introduced I believe the public will quickly accept the labeling.

The radura is a commonly recognized symbol which communicates information about food processing. I believe the radura should be retained as a requirement, along with labeling, and that the requirement to inform the public should not expire. I believe it is mistaken logic to believe that if consumers are notified initially they will thereafter be informed of the manner in which their food was processed. Perpetual labeling will also inform new consumers, and the radura symbol is readily recognized by those speaking different languages. I believe that if there is no label and symbol consumers will be misled into believing food has not been irradiated.

I urge you to place the comments received on the internet so that the public can be informed about who is participating in this comment process.

Sincerely,

David Kennedy



98N-1038

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